explore eugene on foot

every day a new wonder

Explore Eugene on Foot

With 28% of Eugenians' trips being one mile or less, walking around town for your shorter trips is an enjoyable and environmentally-friendly option. When you walk around Eugene, you gain the benefits of exercise while seeing Eugene's quirks and beauty — and you come into close contact with your neighbors and nature more than any other way of getting around.

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The Joys of Walking

Improved Physical and Mental Health

While 10,000 steps per day is a common goal, any increase in walking is proven to improve your quality and length of life. Walking while simply enjoying the sounds around you decreases stress, depression, and anxiety levels, and also helps you process your thoughts and emotions. Every 2,000 steps per day you walk (up to 10,000 steps) lowers your risk of premature death, heart disease and cancer by about 10%.

Efficiency

Yep. That's right. Walking is efficient. While it might be one of the slowest ways to get to your destination, walking is efficient because it enables you to "stack" many tasks at once. For example, you can accomplish all the following on a single 45-minute walking trip:

- Get to your destination
- Get your exercise in for the day
- Pick up something— walking in and out takes less time than parking a car
- Spend time with loved ones (on phone or on foot)
- Enjoy your favorite audiobook or podcast
- Walk your dog (well-behaved dogs are welcome in some grocery stores)

When you think about all you can accomplish along the way, you might find that walking is the most efficient form of transportation even if it is the slowest.

Deeper Community Connection

The more people someone greets in a day, the less lonely they find life to be. When you offer a "good morning" or "good afternoon" to whomever you pass, you improve the day for both of you. Take in the unique sights and sounds of each neighborhood, the changing flora of the season, and the feel of fresh air on your skin.

Tangible Environmental Impacts

With 28% of trips made by Eugenians being one mile or less, choosing to walk sometimes just makes sense. Walking instead of just one car journey a week will reduce your contribution to car traffic and its associated greenhouse gas emissions by almost 10%. That 10% reduction can improve local air quality and lower asthma rates. Eugene aims to triple the number of trips made by residents walking, biking and taking the bus by 2035 — you can be a part of reaching that goal.

Weave Walking Into Your Routine

The more you learn to separate going somewhere from getting home, the more you will find opportunities to walk. The majority of Eugenians' errands are within 2 miles of their home, which is a 40-minute walk. Consider walking the two miles to your errand and taking PeaceHealth Rides bike share or hail a taxi/Lyft/Uber home. Here are some ideas for adding more steps into your life:

- Choose a destination in your neighborhood (a corner store, a cafe, a park, a restaurant or grocery) that you will commit to walking to most of the time
- Park a few streets away from your destination or at the far end of the parking lot; get off the bus a couple stops early
- Make it an aim to walk just one day a week to work, school or another frequent destination within a couple of miles
- Gather some parents in your neighborhood who'd like to take turns leading the kids on foot to your local school (called a "walking school bus")

Route Planning

Just like you might use a map or an app to plan a route to drive or bike, do the same for walking. Unfortunately, app-based maps such as Google Maps don't give you the most enjoyable walking route or even the most direct one.

So how do you plan your route? Use a mapping service as a place to start and then adjust the route to include as many of the following as you can:

- quieter streets where there isn't much car traffic
- passing by parks, murals or other points of beauty
- good tree coverage— both for screening from the sun/rain and for enjoyment
- pass by grocery stores or shops you like to go to

Once you walk your route a few times, you're likely to find small cut-through opportunities that make your trip more efficient and that no app could tell you about.

Walking in All Types of Weather

As the saying goes, "there's no bad weather– just bad clothing." Walking in the elements keeps you connected to nature and can give you a sense of vitality as long as your clothes are keeping you relatively comfortable.

Cold

Dressing in layers is helpful in the cold because — after about 20 minutes of walking — you'll find you are far warmer than when you began and need to remove a layer or two. Gloves and/or fleece-lined pockets are helpful. If you prefer gloves and use your phone often while walking, look for a set of touchscreen or fingerless gloves. If you choose a hat, make it a light hat or be prepared to remove it along the way. Same with scarves. Vests are great for keeping in core body heat without trapping in moisture. Eugene's cold temperatures often come with moisture, making wool an excellent choice for warmth with breathability.

Rain

Be prepared for frequent rain from October to April. In the rain, breathability is important because waterproof clothing can leave you feeling sweaty if it isn't designed to be breathable. Increase your water resistance a bit by wearing a wide-brimmed hat or carrying an umbrella. Wear waterproof shoes no matter what because you're sure to find yourself walking through puddles along the way. Consider packing an extra pair of socks to change into.

For heavier rain, add a waterproof jacket (whether breathable or not) and a pair of waterproof pants that fit over your regular clothes. Another option can be a rain cape, which will keep most of the rain off your clothes.

Heat

In the warm weather months, dress in layers you can peel off should you need to. It can be helpful to wear or pack a pair of walking sandals to keep your feet dry over longer distances. Consider a wide-brimmed hat to protect you from the sun, wearing sunblock, and walking on the shady side of the street.

Gear That Makes for a Smooth Walk

When you're walking as a means to get from here to there, keeping some items with you will make your trips more smooth:

- small waterproof backpack or bag for whatever you might need to carry. A messenger bag or other cross-body bag is not recommended unless you switch it from one shoulder to the other to balance the impact on your body
- headphones with a mic for listening to music and making calls; consider bone conduction headphones to free your ears to take in the sounds around you
- even if you have to pack a second set of shoes for your destination, opt for comfortable footwear: completely flat with no heel, a wide toe box, and some cushion to soften your steps over all that concrete
- packable bags — keeping one of those grocery bags or backpacks that folds up into its own small pocket can expand your carrying capacity
- lights and reflective materials — attach lights or other reflective material to your bag or body to be more easily spotted in the dark; reflective shoelaces are great as well
- sunscreen for face and lips — put it on before you go and keep some in your bag
- a hand cart or grocery dolly is helpful for getting groceries home from a nearby store
- if you choose to wear a hat to protect you from the sun or rain, get one with a chin strap or other loop you can easily attach it to your backpack/bag whenever you don't need it

Turn Up the Exercise

The human body is designed to walk a lot. For thousands of years, humans walked five to nine miles (about 11,000 - 20,000 steps) per day hunting and gathering. Our bodies still thrive whenever we walk often. If you already enjoy walking regularly and you'd like to turn up the dial on the exercise you're getting, here are a few things to try:

- pick up the pace — walking at a brisk pace for about 30 minutes a day reduces your risk of heart disease, cancer, dementia and death, that 30 minutes can be broken up throughout the day
- add weight — walking groceries home, for example, can be a good physical challenge as can ankle or wrist weights
- consider your footwear — consult with your doctor, but slowly lowering the amount of ankle and arch support in your footwear and/or finding shoes with a wider toe box can help the muscles in your feet and ankles develop strength over time
- vary the surface — opt for natural surfaces when you can to add extra challenge to your feet, ankles and hips (the grass

Turn Up the Exercise CONT.

in a park, for example); the more flexible the soles of your footwear, the more effective this will be; choose routes that include an incline

- "hike" the city — maybe you have an errand all the way across town so you make a day of it by eating a good breakfast, packing a lunch, and setting out in some comfortable shoes for an extra long walk; complete your errand and then decide whether to walk back home or opt for PeaceHealth Rides bike share, or hailing a ride (taxi, Lyft, Uber)
- have your walking gait assessed by a physical therapist and integrate the feedback; learning to activate some of your underused muscles will give you a workout and improve your whole body's alignment from the ground up
- vary your carry — shift your backpack to your front, switch your grocery bag from one shoulder to the other, etc. The more you move around your load, the more parts of your body you work, and the less likely you are to overstress/overuse certain muscles
- if you wear a backpack while walking regularly, challenge yourself to engage the muscles necessary to not let the backpack sway back and forth as you take each step; this small change can have a large impact on your core over time
- make it a physical challenge for you and your family to walk home your Halloween pumpkins, your groceries, etc;

Walking with Kids (Toddlers to Pre-Teens)

Getting kids used to walking instead of driving in a car can take a bit of transition time, but their bodies were designed for a lot of walking. In fact, in our hunter-gatherer ancestors' time, kids and families walked an estimated 45 minutes per day together, so the capacity is there. Just be sure to start out small and increase the distance traveled over time. Oh, and — don't forget the snacks!

Here are 10 tips for getting kids to walk more by Katy Bowman, biomechanist and author of *Grow Wild: The Whole-Child, Whole-Family, Nature-Rich Guide to Moving More*:

1. **Get comfortable with complaining** — The human body has a need for movement. It also has the genetic tendency to conserve energy— it's a paradox. Meet your children's complaints with compassion and keep walking.
2. **Start them early** — Toddlers already want to walk and you can work with them on following you. Cultivating a walking habit early will pay off for a long time– maybe the rest of their lives.

Walking with Kids (Toddlers to Pre-Teens) CONT.

3. **Make walking a "have to"** — Just like kids have to brush their teeth or take a bath, make walking a "have to" that's simply not negotiable. Eventually, walking will just become part of your child's routine. You can even say: We're going to walk for just seven minutes and then we'll check in. Often, they'll want to keep going.
4. **Let them choose to lead the walk if you can** — when it becomes age-appropriate, ask: Where would you like to walk? What route would you like to take? Children who choose the destination and route are likely to be more excited about it.
5. **Try not to worry about speed or distance** — Kids often want to go off the path, make stops, look at bugs and climb trees because walking is just another form of play.
6. **Bring friends** — Children are more interested in what their peers and those a couple years older are doing. If you can collect a group of kids of varying ages, they'll often lead each other without much assistance.
7. **Play walking games** — Complaints along the way are often due to children's short attention span so play games and change them often. Toss a ball back and forth between the two of you, jump over cracks in the sidewalk, spot colors/flowers/letters/etc.
8. **Walk for transportation** — Help your kids practice physically challenging their bodies to get places they need or want to go like walking to/from school, walking to get a treat or to get to a friend's house.
9. **Early morning/after dinner walks** — Both these times will challenge you and your family to get familiar with walking in the cold and dark. Mugs of warm beverages will help.
10. **Try some walk infused activities** — Grab some pads and watercolors, walk somewhere, and paint there. Perhaps stop at three different places and paint three different things and then head home. Or perhaps you walk to gather up items from nature from around the neighborhood for your mantle or dinner table.

Explore & Learn

Walking places gives you time not only to stay in touch with your loved ones with phone calls and to get exercise, but also spend some time learning and growing.

Open Your Ears

If you haven't tried an audiobook from the Eugene Public Library yet, try it while walking. If you do you're likely to find many opportunities to walk places just so you can keep listening. Same goes for podcasts, music and audio courses.

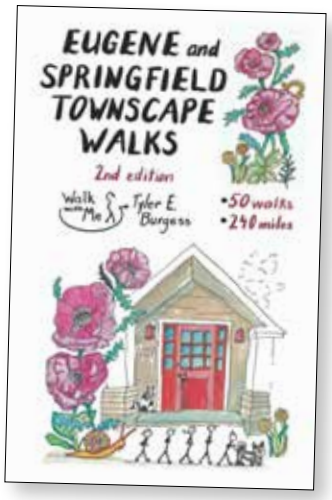
Book: *Eugene and Springfield Townscape Walks*

Get to know Eugene better on foot by trying some of the walks from the *Eugene and Springfield Townscape Walks* by Tyler E. Burgess.

Some of the most beloved walks featured in the book include:

- Ashley Estates *(Cal Young neighborhood)*
- Golden Gardens Pond *(Bethel neighborhood)*
- Sweet Life Loop *(Whiteaker and Jefferson-Westside neighborhoods)*
- Hawkin's Haunts *(Churchill neighborhood)*
- Fairmount Trail *(Fairmont neighborhood)*
- Exploring Edgewood Trails *(Southeast Eugene)*
- Cold Sprint *(Amazon Drive area)*

The book is available at local grocery stores, bookstores and shops throughout town. Visit Walk-With-Me.com for more information.



An Opportunity to Explore & Learn CONT.

Practice Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the art of paying attention and it offers tremendous benefits for your mental health. Use walking to your next errand as an opportunity to pay attention to your breath, the trees, or spotting the beauty of nature around you.

Strides for Social Justice Walks

Download the Strides for Social Justice app for a series of free tours of historic sites integral to Eugene's history, especially uplifting the challenges and triumphs of Black residents. The app contains not only historical information, but reflection and discussion questions for you and your family.

The routes vary in length, but each tour includes a historical synopsis of the route's sites and landmarks. Available tours include:

1. Skinner Butte
2. Downtown Eugene
3. University of Oregon Academics & Student Life
4. University of Oregon Athletics
5. West Eugene
6. Westmoreland Park
7. South Eugene

Important to Know

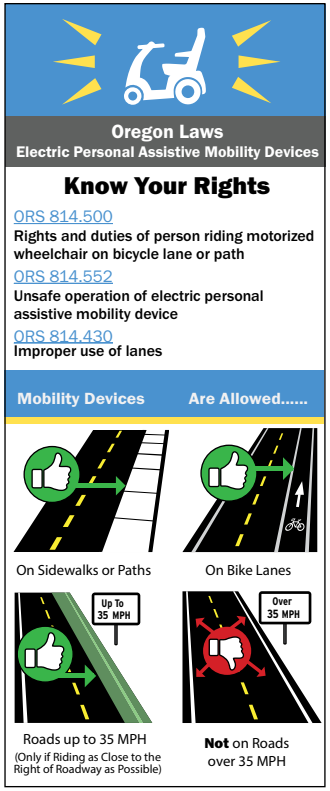
Unique Oregon Crosswalk Right-of-Way Laws

In Oregon, every street corner is a legal crosswalk — whether marked with paint or not. The law requires people driving to stop for anyone indicating they'd like to walk across the street at a crosswalk/corner. The person walking must show they intend to cross by extending any part of their body, wheelchair, cane or crutches into the crosswalk. As long as they've given the car traffic a "reasonable" time to stop — the person driving is required by law to come to a complete stop until the person walks past their lane and the next one. People driving who do not stop, ignore that someone's using a crosswalk, speed up to intimidate the walker may be cited, fined and/or arrested.

Using the Path System

Eugene has over 45 miles of off-street paved paths, which can be one of the most enjoyable ways to walk from here to there. The paths are shared between people walking, biking, scooter-ing and more, so following a few rules can help keep everyone comfortable and safe:

- Stay to the right unless passing—just like you would on a street
- Walk no more than two shoulder-to-shoulder: don't use more than your half of the path
- Listen for bike bells or "on your left!" calls by people moving faster than you. Raise your hand to let the person passing know you heard them.
- The slowest travelers — people walking — have the right-of-way. People running, cycling or otherwise moving more quickly need to pass at a safe 12 miles per hour or less.


Oregon Laws
Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Devices
Know Your Rights
ORS 814.500
Rights and duties of person riding motorized wheelchair on bicycle lane or path
ORS 814.552
Unsafe operation of electric personal assistive mobility device
ORS 814.430
Improper use of lanes
Mobility Devices Are Allowed.....
On Sidewalks or Paths
On Bike Lanes
Up To 35 MPH
Over 35 MPH
Roads up to 35 MPH
(Only if Riding as Close to the Right of Roadway as Possible)
Not on Roads over 35 MPH

Important to Know CONT.

No Sidewalk? Go Against the Flow

If there isn't a sidewalk, walk on the shoulder or as far to the left as possible facing oncoming traffic.

Stay Alert & Visible

Never text or scroll on your phone when crossing a street. At night, do your best to be visible with a clip-on light or a reflective item on your clothes. Even the flashlight on your phone can help you be seen.

Rapid Flashing Beacons

These bright yellow flashing lights are often paired with a bright yellow walk sign and found at street crossings where there's a lot traffic. Tell drivers you want to walk across the street by pressing the button. The car traffic on these busy streets can sometimes resist stopping so be careful.

Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons

These lights flash yellow and red to alert drivers that someone walking would like to cross the street. They are often found in places where there is a lot of car traffic, but not a lot of foot traffic. You have to press the button to turn the lights on before you cross. Drivers are required come to a safe stop when the lights turn on.

	DRIVERS Will See	DRIVERS Will Do	PEDESTRIANS Will See	PEDESTRIANS Will Do
1		proceed with caution		push the button to activate the system
2		slow down ped. has activated the system		wait
3		prepare to stop		continue to wait
4		**stop** ped. in crosswalk		start crossing when vehicles stop
5	FLASHING	**stop** proceed with caution if clear		continue crossing signal will count down
6		proceed with caution		push the button to activate the system

Adventure Ideas

Get There Eugene has some post cards with walking adventure ideas. Here's a few more:

- All along the Willamette River in Eugene and into the nearby town of Springfield are fifteen boulders, carved with Yoncalla Kalapuya words and their English translations. The Kalapuya are the first people of this land and their history stretches back 14,000 years. Discover the "Talking Stones" along the Ruth Bascom Riverbank Path.
- Drive or bike to the base of Hendrick's Park on 19th Avenue (there's a PeaceHealth Rides bike share station right there too). Pack a picnic or grab some food at a nearby restaurant. Walk your way up through the Fairmont neighborhood into Hendrick's Park. If you want to go farther, use the Ribbon Trail.
- Eugene's Ridgeline Trail system rings the southern edge of the city with a series of large, semi-connected parklands. The 12 miles has seven trailheads — make it a goal to hike the whole thing, either over time or all at once!
- Learn more about the University of Oregon by trying one of its self-guided walking tours at cpfm.uoregon.edu/self-guided-campus-tours.
- Join one of the local walking groups for a day! Some local walking groups include the Walk 'n Talkers, Spirited Walkers, and Obsidians.
- There's lots of walking fun in October, celebrated as "Walktober" locally, so look out for posters in the autumn.
- Pick an across-town destination you've never been to before and walk all the way there. This kind of walking is sort of an urban hike, so take a backpack and snacks. Choose to walk home or get a bike share bike, take the bus or hail a taxi, Lyft or Uber.

Personal Safety While Walking

Walking alone — particularly at night — is likely to inspire caution in women and others from marginalized groups. The best thing you can do is to stay alert by putting away your phone and headphones, keep your hands free in case you need to use them, and look people in the eye.

Places where there's street lamps and foot traffic will feel safer than neighborhood streets which tend to be darker. Bright street lamps can create a lot of deep shadows, making it difficult to see clearly. There are two primary methods for dealing with this (1) carry your own light so you can point it in whatever direction you'd like, or (2) walk in the most open space possible — the street itself — so you can easily spot someone approaching. If you opt to walk in the middle of the street, it is your responsibility to move out of the way of cars.

Opt for light or reflective clothing. Reflective materials attached to your backpack or jacket is a good way to do this. You can also pack a reflective sash clip-on light for your bag or clothing.

You might choose to carry a non-violent deterrent such as a whistle or pepper spray — just be sure to only use the pepper spray in the case of an emergency. There are also free and low-cost self-defense and de-escalation technique classes if you'd like to get some training and practice.

If there is a crime in progress, call 911 immediately. If there's a less urgent matter that the police department should know about, call their non-emergency line: 541-682-5111. If experience a non-emergency safety issue in a park, file a Park Watch report at eugene-or.gov/parkwatch. See the next page for information on how to report an act of hate or bias.

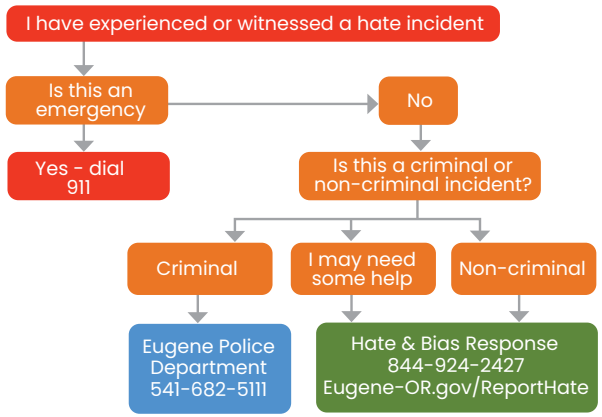
Be of Service While Out and About

People who walk often have more encounters with their neighbors than those who drive or bike. You are likely to experience people on their best days as well as their worst. If you're someone who wants to be prepared to assist or intervene, consider free and low-cost local trainings like:

- CPR and first aid
- Stop the Bleed
- conflict de-escalation
- NARCAN administration
- hate and bias intervention

You're also likely to spot maintenance issues you think need fixing on the streets or sidewalks. Bookmark the maintenance service request form (eugene-or.gov/1776/Maintenance-Service-Request) on your phone so you can quickly snap a photo and report the issue. Your request will be routed directly to the maintenance team. This is the fastest way to flag something that needs to be worked on; in fact, it's the same form a City staff person will use if you were to call with your concern.

Below is a basic guide for what to do if you experience or witness an act of hate based on a legally-protected status (which includes race, color, national origin, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, age, economic/social class, source of income or labor organization membership):


I have experienced or witnessed a hate incident
Is this an emergency
No
Yes - dial 911
Is this a criminal or non-criminal incident?
Criminal
I may need some help
Non-criminal
Eugene Police Department 541-682-5111
Hate & Bias Response 844-924-2427 Eugene-OR.gov/ReportHate

Additional Resources

Get There Eugene - your central resource for getting around Eugene, including not only information, but fun tours and inspirationl. eugene-or.gov/GetThere

The Eugene Bike Map's purple shared-use paths through parks and green neighborhood streets are some of the most enjoyable walking routes. In English and Spanish: eugene-or.gov/1849/Bike-Maps

Get There Oregon — a website and app to help you plan your bus and carpool trips, track your savings, and win state and local prizes for doing so. GetThereOregon.org

Safe Routes to School — A regional program that advocates for and promotes safe bicycling and walking to and from schools. They work with school PE teachers to teach a walking safety class to elementary school students. They also hold fun events. eugenespringfieldsrts.org

Public Works Maintenance Request — request a fix on a street or sidewalk using this online form. This is the fastest ways to reach the City's maintenance team and the same form staff will use to record your request if you call. Bookmark the page on your phone for ease. eugene-or.gov/Maintenance-Service-Request Phone: 541-682-4800

Police Department Non-Emergency Line: 541-682-5111

Pedestrian-related Laws in Oregon: oregonwalks.org/walkingresources

The Nutritious Movement website along with many books by its founder, Katy Bowman, can offer inspiration and practical tips for walking more in your daily life. NutritiousMovement.com

Eugene

get there eugene

City of Eugene Public Works Transportation Planning
180 W. 8th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97401

Do you have questions or need more information?
Contact us:

eugene-or.gov/GetThere

Email: GetThereEug@eugene-or.gov

Phone: 541-682-5291